

GOVARDHANRAM
MADHAVRAM TRIPATHI'S
SCRAP BOOK

1888-1894

Manuscript Volumes I, II, III,
IV—Part (i)

Edited by

KANTILAL C. PANDYA
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GOVARDHANRAM

Govardhanrám Mádhavrám Tripáthi was born on October 20, 1855, at Nadiád in the heart of Gujarat. It was the day of Dashera, one of the most auspicious days in the Hindu Calendar all over India.

Born with a silver spoon in his mouth he regarded his childhood and the first fifteen or eighteen years as the happiest period of his life. As he acknowledged in the dedication of "Sarasvatichandra", in 1887, to his "Cousin-Uncle" Mansukhrám Suryarám Tripáthi, it was that "Cousin-Uncle" who sowed in him the seed of mental bliss and moulded his mind through all the vicissitudes of life.

The growing mind of Govardhanrám drank deeply of Sanskrit and English literatures, of History and allied subjects. This study had begun to result in the formation of some important resolutions as principles of life, when the storm burst over him. First his wife and then his first child died; the firm of his father became bankrupt; unnerved by this he made a miscalculation which resulted in his failure in 1874 at the B.A. examination of the University of Bombay. He passed that examination the next year, but he was then penniless and at the mercy of his relatives. He had serious and persistent maladies of the body and the mind.

He was forced by these circumstances to accept a small post as personal secretary to Samaldas, the gifted Dewan of Bhávnagar. Life at Bhávnagar was a life of difficulties, in which his second wife brought a ray of much-needed sunshine.

Facing poor health and financial straits he persisted in his study of Law and, after several failures, passed the exam. in 1883. Then, true to his early resolutions, though with empty pockets, he launched in legal practice at the Bombay High Court in June 1884.

He flourished remarkably well, refusing all through his life lucrative appointments offered by Cutch, Baroda and Junagadh. He paid off all his father's debts and supported a family of about a dozen members in Bombay for some fifteen years. And, with all that, he did an incredibly large amount of literary work of the highest merit.

"Sarasvatichandra" Part I was published in 1887; "Sneha-mudrá" (the Signet of Love) a collection of poems, followed in 1889; "Sarasvatichandra" Part II came in 1892. These quickly took people by storm. The event was most unusual and unparalleled in Gujarát. His popularity was then unequalled.

[Contd. on Back Flap

प्रिय गेन लदा

अने

Shri..... अरविं.

With Compliments

And Love

from..... भोराभा.

१४:८:५६



Young Govardhanram

20-10-1855

4-1-1907

GOVARDHANRAM
MADHAVRAM TRIPATHI'S

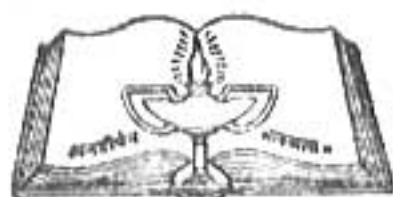
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CONTENTS

	PAGES
“Scrap Book—My Friend” ..	vi
Foreword: Ramprasad P. Bakshi ..	vii
Introduction: Sanmukhlal J. Pandya ..	xi
“My own Idiosyncrasies” ..	xviii
SCRAP BOOK, Vol. I: 1888-1891 ..	1-33
Preface: Kantilal C. Pandya ..	xix
Shall we live after Death?	1
Some questions of Religious Philosophy ..	4
The Consent Age Bill	9
Forming Temporary Opinions	18
My Mundane Duties to my Country ..	24
Personal Notes	25
Duties in regard to the Country ..	28
An Illusion: Parents’ Pilgrimage ..	31
Notes:* Vol. I	33
“That Admirable Woman”	34
SCRAP BOOK, Vol. II: 1891	35-85
Social Complaints and Remedies ..	39
The Rāmāyana (the text of)	39
Conscience, Free Will and Predestination ..	44
The Moral Code	50
How am I to mould the people? ..	51
Virtue and Vice	52
चित् and आनन्द, Vedantic conception of ..	79
“The Soul that sanctified my Home” ..	86

*The numbers in brackets in the text refer to notes and translations on page number 33.

	PAGES
SCRAP BOOK, Vol. III: 1891-1893 ..	87-212
Some Reflections on Philosophy ..	98
यज्ञ, ब्रह्म, चित्, संविद्.	
Author's Theory of Will Force & Schopenhauer	100
Asceticism versus Consumption	100
Krishna and the Christ: भक्तिमार्ग	104
Origin of Temples and Gods	110
The Purpose of a Home Library	120
Factors in the Training of the Heart	121
The Threefold Duty of Man	124
Limits of Consumption	127
The Right Attitude towards Money	128
Sacrifice in Profession	132
The State after Death	145
Transmigration Theory—an examination	147
The Problem of Foreign Rule	149
The Power of Imagination	153
Author's Reading Programme	156
"My own Idiosyncrasies"	177
Historical Method in the study of Philosophy	188
Vedanta: old and new	191
Shankar's philosophy has conquered by absorption	192
Vedanta and Ethics	195
Some characters in Saraswatichandra and some of G.M.T.'s people	199
Notes* on Vol. III	201-204
Govardhanram's 21 Sanskrit Verses	205

*The numbers in brackets in the text refer to notes and translations given on page numbers 201-204.

SCRAP BOOK, Vol. IV (Part): 1893-1894 ..	213-268
Some cardinal principles to be enforced in domestic matters	213
About talking to others re: personal matters	226
The Meaning of Adversity	228
Vedanta and Ethics	235
Thoughts on the Joint Family	237
Examinership—A public duty	243
Misfortunes and the Past Life	247
Transmigration Theory examined	248
The Mental Freedom of मुक्त ज्ञानी	251
Early Marriages in America and Europe..	254
The Position of Women in Patriarchal Society	261
“My Temper”	268
Notes:* Vol. IV	269
INDEX	271-276

*The numbers in brackets in the text refer to notes and translations given on page number 269.

SCRAP BOOK—MY FRIEND

What is the meaning of writing and writing and writing in such books? Hereby I sometimes note down my conclusions to prevent their loss; sometimes I make myself exact thereby; at other times I ease my heart by pouring it on paper. I have no friend to talk to except myself. When I turn over these pages, I feel reminded, sympathised and consoled; I look and blush at my weak moments as reflected here. I take courage and strength from here. The current that flows, now forward and now backward, can be traced here with greater continuity. My strength and weakness are here, I can take lesson from the one during the nightmare of the other. Need not be ashamed or afraid of what may be said hereof by someone into whose hands this may fall in future. Personally I have not to hear what he will say. Philosophically saying, he may benefit by the study of an underground life like mine. If he harms himself by this—how I can help it? I do not think that this will harm—but all things are capable of being abused, and he who does not guard against a likely abuse is to blame. Well, this is my private affair, and if the private be destined to be accessible to others—let those others be left to use their discretion and destroy this if fit. The Great Will has it that I should will, and I will to write, for what looks fair and proper, so far as my horizon can extend. There my duty ends.

Scrap Book II

10-7-1891

PREFACE

Govardhanram came to Bombay to practise at the High Court in August 1884. He started this First Volume on the 1st January 1885. Naturally he had then little time to give to it, and for a long time it remained a Scrap Book only, containing various references to what he read and to what he planned to read, with summaries, extracts and abstracts as he thought fit.

It was three years later, on the 9th February, 1888, that an important essay on "Shall we live after Death?" was put in: it took just a little more than four pages of the present Scrap Book. Perhaps the question exercised his mind; as perhaps he got some replies from science, he put them here to think and remember better. His "Sarasvaticandra" Part I had appeared a little before (in 1887), and this must have given him considerable confidence.

Still another essay came again three years later, in 1891. This year was indeed very important in his literary life: not only the second part of "Sarasvaticandra" was then being written, but the Vols. I, II and the beginning of the III of the Scrap Books came in in 1891.

The true Scrap Book character was thus modified more and more till Govardhanram's own thoughts, comments, experiences and life, which distinguish his Scrap Books, replaced and filled up the older scrappy character.

Excellent accounts and descriptions followed on "The Consent Age Bill" (now almost an academic question, but treated with great soberness), "Forming Temporary Opinions", "Duties to the Country"

(India) and "Personal Notes" followed. The last "Illusion" brought up the financial embarrassment temporarily caused by his parents' pilgrimage.

The first and the seventh books are the smallest, the first on account of the scraps, the last on account of the long illness which proved the last.

September, 1958.

K. C. PANDYA

FOREWORD

The last of the seven volumes of Govardhanram Tripathi's Scrap-Book, edited by Dr. Kantilal C. Pandya, was published in 1957. The type-scripts of the remaining six volumes were ready, and Dr. Pandya had, in spite of his failing health, gone through them and almost prepared them for the press before his sad death which occurred in October 1958.

A final careful perusal and close scrutiny of that material seemed necessary. Footnotes had yet to be added and explanatory notes remained to be appended. It was fortunate that Shri Sanmukhlal J. Pandya had been, from the very start, closely and actively associated with Dr. Kantilal Pandya in the handling of the material. I happened to come into a corner of the picture when, in May 1958, I was invited by both these friends to go through the type-written copies of the first six volumes of the Scrap-Book. I am glad of the opportunity, which I thus got, of being of help to Shri S. J. Pandya, who, after Dr. Pandya's death, has borne the brunt of this undertaking.

The prefatory remarks anent Vol. I, penned by Dr. Kantilal Pandya before he died, have been prefixed to that portion in this book. This present foreword, therefore, has particular reference to Govardhanram's volumes II and III. These, between them, cover the period from 5th April 1891 to 6th November 1893. The inclusion in this book, as a matter of convenience, of a few pages of Vol. IV brings the period covered by it down to April 1894.

This was an eventful period in Govardhanram's life. It was a period of vast reading and deep reflection, of intense creative and critical literary activity in the midst of frequent illness, a dread of failing eye-sight and anxious parental duties such as the marriage of

two daughters. The second part of Govardhanram's epoch-making novel *Sarasvatichandra* was completed in 1891 and published on 9th June 1892. The writing of the third part of that novel was taken in hand in 1893, though it was completed as late as in 1896 and could not be published before 1898. It was in 1893 that, as an outcome of his studies of Gujarati Poets pursued during this period, Govardhanram prepared and read his famous Paper on *The Classical Poets of Gujarat*. It was published in 1894 in the form of a book. *The Life of Navalram*, and a collection of his works to which it was prefixed, came to be completed in 1891. A poem called "Jeeva, Mrityu ane Mrityu Pachhi" (*The Living Principle, Death and After Death*) and another called "Samsâra Prati-bimba" (*The Reflected Image of Worldly Life*) also fall within this period.

The Scrap-Books of this period contain a wealth of thoughts on matters philosophical, ethical, religious and social. The reader is particularly invited to scan Govardhanram's treatment of such topics as the Pauranic-cum-Poetic character of the *Ramayana*; Conscience, Free Will and Predestination; Vice and Virtue in terms of the Author's philosophy of Consumption—all in Vol. II.

The noteworthy features of Vol. III are the Author's view of the rise of *Bhakti-marga*; his preference of the Philosophy of Consumption in Duty over the stagnation of Vedantic Asceticism; his reflections on the State after Death and on the Theory of Transmigration.

Of particular interest will prove the author's analysis of his own mind and character, his detailed plan of study, his estimates of some members of his family and the "Last Word" on the question of Joint Family System (*vide* entry of 16th September 1893).

This last mentioned topic is again taken up in the portion of Vol. IV included in this book. In this portion the author deals also with such topics as Vedanta and Ethics, the Mental Freedom of the Jnani, the position of women in Patriarchal Society and, once again, the Transmigration Theory.

In the literary domain Govardhanram, has already earned a lofty pedestal of glory. The very high reputation he enjoys stands firmly on the critical appraisal of his literary works by foremost Gujarati scholars. The Scrap-Books have a value of their own. They take us round the writer's intellectual workshop and let us have a peep into the recesses of his heart. The reader is often left wondering which of the two, the head or the heart, prevails over the other in Govardhanram's life. He will, I expect, ultimately conclude that while the head predominates over the heart it is not allowed an autocratic sway. The head decides, but is not heedless of the heart's advice. Each question, whether professional, financial, social or domestic, is judged and decided after a remarkably patient weighing of the pros and cons in the scales both of benevolent sentiment and austere reason.

It will be interesting to compare this allotment, by Govardhanram, of spheres and functions to the head and the heart with the part played by himself and by his noble wife in dealing with domestic matters. I shall leave it to the reader to see for himself how Govardhanram and Lalitagauri were complements of each other in the true sense, and how they jointly dedicated themselves to the service of the joint family.

"What is the meaning of writing and writing in such books?" asks Govardhanram in Vol. II of his Scrap-Book. He has, perhaps, taken this question out of the mouth of the likely meticulous reader. But he has answered it well:

"Hereby sometimes I note down my conclusions to prevent their loss; sometimes I make myself exact

thereby ; at other times I ease my heart by pouring it on paper . . . when I turn over these pages, I feel reminded, sympathised and consoled. I look and blush at the weak moments as reflected here. I take courage and strength from here. . . . Need not be ashamed or afraid of what may be said hereof by someone into whose hands this may fall *in future*. Personally I have not to hear what he will say."

That "future" is now, here. And "what may be said hereof" is going to be, I dare say, a high tribute to the magnanimous soul.

RAMPRASAD P. BAKSHI

